



Statement by Ammar Hijazi, Ambassador - Assistant Minister or Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the State of Palestine, before the Fifth Conference of States Parties to the ATT, Geneva- Switzerland 26-30 August 2019

Mr. President,

State of Palestine would like extend its appreciation to your Excellency for leading our efforts in a transparent, comprehensive and effective manner, including during the preparatory process for the Fifth Conference of States Parties (CSP5). We also extend appreciation to the Secretariat, the Working Groups Chairs and the Subgroup facilitators for their efforts in ensuring constructive dialogue including the preparation of draft reports and draft proposals. Our appreciation goes to the Swiss Government for hosting the conference and providing the facilities to holding our meeting today.

Palestine stands ready to contribute to a successful outcome of the 5th Conference.

Mr. President,

The State of Palestine welcomes and congratulates Suriname, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Palau, Lebanon, Botswana and Canada for joining the treaty. In this regard, the State of Palestine also welcomes all outreach activities to promote the universalization of the ATT leading to progressive growth in the number of States Parties to 104 States. However, the State of Palestine regrets the fact that a number of **major arms exporters and importers are not yet party to the treaty** and calls upon those States to do so, as responsible arms transfers represents a humanitarian imperative and is an essential step towards maintaining international peace and security.

In this connection, the State of Palestine regrets the United States Administration's apparent reversal of position regarding signing the ATT. This is not only a counterproductive approach, it threatens to paralyze the effective implementation of the ATT provisions, particularly in light of the fact that the United States is the globe's number one arms exporter.

Mr. President,

The ATT reflects a concrete commitment, notably, to embrace our common humanity, preserve human dignity and reduce human suffering by putting an end to irresponsible trade of conventional weapons, wherever there is a risk of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity. As conflicts erupt and flare around the world, we all have a shared responsibility to protect the multilateral rules-based order, thus also ensuring full

respect of this Treaty by prohibiting arms transfer where there are risks of committing war crimes and serious violations of international human rights law.

As explicitly recognized in the text of the treaty, it is the duty of the States parties to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law. This entails: a) an obligation **not to encourage** these violations; and b) an obligation to take **all possible** steps to put an end to and prevent violations.

Therefore, before authorizing export of weapons, the recipient's State record of respect for international humanitarian law and human rights law and the **recipient's formal commitments** have to be taken into consideration. If the recipient is not committed to the ATT and other disarmament and Arms Control treaties that complement the ATT, States Parties have no guarantee of maintaining the ATT's rationale and purpose and as such must reconsider supplying arms in these conditions. Further, States Parties should cooperate to take firm measures in the face of any attempt to defeat the object and purpose of the treaty. Otherwise, undermining international peace and security will become the trend.

Mr. President,

In spite of the difficulties our people and country is going through due to the Israel's illegal occupation of the land of the State of Palestine, we are keen in implementing all our duties and upholding its responsibilities concerning the ATT, including reporting and financial obligations. This is born from our conviction that rules based international order lead by multilateralism is the foundation of ensuring freedom, justice and peace for all.

Lastly, Mr. President,

I proudly represent a people who suffer the consequences of irresponsible arms trade as well as the widespread abuses of a military power that systematically uses weapons to violate its obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law. The ATT can make a difference in many nations' lives, including my own. It cannot deliver justice or heal wounds. But, it can, if we are serious about implementation, spare countless potential protected persons, including women and children, from needless suffering. The State of Palestine stands ready and committed to play its role in ensuring the implementation and respect of the treaty.

Thank You Mr. President